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10	JUAN SÁRINANA; ADRIANÁ ZUNIGA; PREM SARIN;
-	DAVID BOUFFARD; and HECTOR SANCHEZ
11	, '
12	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COUR

Т CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, WESTERN DIVISION

Plaintiff, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. OFFICERS AND AGENTS AND INDIVIDUALS OF THE PEOPLES COLLEGE OF LAW; et al. Defendants.

TODD R. G. HILL,

Case No. 2:23-cv-01298-JLS-BFMx

DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS PLAINTIFF'S FOURTH AMENDED COMPLAINT: DECLARATION OF JEFFREY KIRWIN

Judge: Josephine L. Staton Magistrate: Brianna Fuller Mircheff

Hearing Judge: Brianna Fuller Mircheff Date: May 27, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on April 17, 2025, Defendants THE GUILD LAW SCHOOL DBA PEOPLE'S COLLEGE OF LAW, JOSHUA GILLENS, WILLIAM MAESTAS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE PEOPLE'S

COLLEGE OF LAW, CHRISTINA MARIN GONZALEZ, ROGER ARAMAYO, 27

ISMAIL VENEGAS,; CLEMENTE FRANCO, HECTOR PENA, PASCUAL

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TORRES, CAROL DEUPREE, JESSICA VIRAMONTES, JUAN SARINANA, AND JOSHUA GILLEN (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Defendants")¹ move to dismiss with prejudice Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint as docket 257 served on April 3, 2025 and the Entire Action.²

The motion is based on this notice, the attached memorandum of points and authorities, declaration of Jeffrey Kirwin, and any other matters submitted by the moving party.

The motion is on the grounds that the Fourth Amended Complaint violates Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8. Moreover, Plaintiff fails to state a cause of action against Defendants in his Fourth Amended Complaint. Therefore, the Court should dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint with prejudice under Rules 8, 12(b)(6) and 41(b).

STATEMENT RE CONFERENCE PURSUANT TO LOCAL RULE 7-3.

Defendants received electronic service of Plaintiff TODD HILL's ("Plaintiff") Fourth Amended Complaint on April 3, 2025. [Declaration of Jeffrey Kirwin (hereinafter "Kirwin Decl.") ¶ 2.] On April 7, 2025, counsel for Defendants requested to meet and confer with Plaintiff pursuant to Local Rule 7-3. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 3.] However, Plaintiff declined to meet and confer with Defendants. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 3.] Instead, Plaintiff responded on the same date with a "non-negotiable" list of information which Defendants had to provide to Plaintiff before he would telephonically meet and confer. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 3.] The list of information required providing Plaintiff with detailed legal grounds, factual basis, specific relief sought,

¹ Counsel also represents Gary Silbiger and Edith Pomposo, but Plaintiff has failed to serve these individuals. Therefore, they are not included in this dismissal motion.

² Defendants note that Plaintiff filed two Fourth Amended Complaints at Dockets 255 and 257. Defendants seek to dismiss the most recent filing at Docket 257.

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and proposed stipulations. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 3.] Counsel for Defendants declined to provide the requisite information as such is not necessary by the local rules and could be accomplished through a telephone conference. Plaintiff re-stated he would only meet and confer "if and when" Defendants provided the information to him. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 4.] Therefore, Defendants tried to satisfy the Court's meet and confer requirement but Plaintiff declined to do so.

Notably, Plaintiff has continually tried to use the tactic of requiring a detailed outline prior to agreeing to telephonically meet and confer to prevent Defendants from meeting and conferring with Plaintiff within the Court's time limits so he can oppose Defendants' motions on the grounds they failed abide by the meet and confer requirement. For example, between August 29 to September 3, 2024, counsel for Defendants attempted to meet and confer with Plaintiff regarding the dismissal of his Third Amended Complaint. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 5.] Plaintiff demanded a detailed outline prior to meeting and conferring with Defendants. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 5.] Even after counsel for Defendant provided the outline, he alleged it was not detailed enough despite Defendants filing several motions to dismiss Plaintiff's complaints on the same grounds. [Kirwin Decl. ¶ 5.]

It is clear that Plaintiff is preventing Defendants from satisfying the meet and confer obligation so that he can dispute the validity of their motions without addressing the substantive arguments raised therein. Such tactics are inappropriate.

DAILD. April 17, 2025	DATED:	April	17,	2025
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HAIGHT BROWN & BONESTEEL LLP

By: /s/ Arezoo Jamshidi

Arezoo Jamshidi Jeffrey Kirwin Attorneys for Defendants THE GUILD LAW SCHOOL DBA PEOPLE'S COLLEGE OF LAW, JOSHUA GILLENS, WILLIAM MAESTAS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE PEOPLE'S COLLEGE OF LAW, CHRISTINA MARIN GONZALEZ; ROGER ARAMAYO; ISMAIL VENEGAS; CLEMENTE FRANCO; HECTOR PENA; PASCUAL TORRES; CAROL DEUPREE; JESSICA VIRAMONTES; JUAN SARINANA; ADRIANA ZUNIGA; PREM SARIN; DAVID BOUFFARD; and HECTOR **SANCHEZ**

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DEFENDANTS MOTION TO DISMISS PLAINTIFF'S FOURTH AMENDED **COMPLAINT**

MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES

I. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

In his Fourth Amended Complaint, Plaintiff Todd Hill ("Plaintiff") pleads four causes of action against several parties arising from his time as a student at THE GUILD SCHOOL OF LAW DBA PEOPLE'S COLLEGE OF LAW ("PCL"). Plaintiff has been afforded six opportunities to draft and file a complaint that complies with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Defendants previous motions to dismiss have provided feedback to Plaintiff, not only as to why his complaints were deficient, but also specific problems with specific claims and specific defendants. The Court has even provided reports and recommendations explaining the deficiencies of the complaints to Plaintiff. Yet, Plaintiff consistently files complaints that repeatedly fail to correct the deficiencies.

Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint exhibits the same errors in Plaintiff's prior pleadings. The Fourth Amended Complaint violates Rule 8. It is 181 pages long with 287 paragraphs that Plaintiff routinely cross-references and incorporates by reference throughout the Complaint. Moreover, the Fourth Amended Complaint is unclear as to what causes of action are alleged against each Defendant, so Defendants are left guessing as to what causes of action are plead against them. Plaintiff also failed to properly define the terms "The Board of Directors," "Officers" or "Agents of the Peoples College of Law." The definitions do not identify which Defendants are included in the definition for each term so Defendants are again left to guess at whether certain causes of action are plead against them.

Moreover, the Fourth Amended Complaint, like the Third Amended Complaint, fails to state a claim against Defendants. The first cause of action for RICO violations fails to allege there was an enterprise, and the allegations included in the cause of action do not meet the heightened pleading standard for racketeering activity. Plaintiff's second cause of action for violations of the Unruh Civil Rights Act fails because it does not provide nonconclusory allegations that Defendants

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acted with discriminatory intent. The third and fourth cause of action for negligence and negligent hiring, retention, and supervision do not properly identify which Defendants the causes of action are plead against and what laws the possible Defendants violated.

Thus, the Court should dismiss Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint with prejudice.

II. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On February 20, 2023, Plaintiff filed his initial Complaint. [Dkt. No. 1.] On April 5, 2023, the Court issued an order, on its own motion, dismissing the Complaint for violation of F.R.C.P. 8(a) and (d), with leave to amend. [Dkt No. 37.] The order explains in detail why the Complaint was improper, how it violated the Federal Rules, and why it must be dismissed. On April 18, 2023, Plaintiff filed a First Amended Complaint. [Dkt. No. 38.]

On May 5, 2023, Plaintiff filed a document entitled "A Motion for Leave to Supplement Todd R. G. Hill's First Amended Complaint," and attached a proposed "Supplemental First Amended Complaint." [Dkt. No. 40.] The "Supplemental First Amended Complaint" was 114 pages, with no exhibits, but referred to the same exhibits as the First Amended Complaint. [Dkt. No. 40.]

On June 7, 2023, the Court issued an order that denied Plaintiff's Motion for Leave to Supplement the First Amended Complaint and dismissed the First Amended Complaint with leave to amend. [Dkt. No. 45.] The order explained in detail why the First Amended Complaint was improper, how it violated the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and this Court's Local Rules, and why it must be dismissed. The Court provided Hill 21 days to file his Second Amended Complaint and requested that the complaint "contain 'short and plain statement' of claim or claims for relief, setting forth, in straightforward fashion, the facts supporting each claim." [Id.] Plaintiff failed to file a Second Amended Complaint within 21 days of the Court's order. On July 27,

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2023, the Court issued a Judgment of Dismissal for failure to file a Second Amended Complaint within the 21 days allotted. [Dkt. No. 47.]

Over a month later, on September 7, 2023, Plaintiff filed a "Motion for Leave to File a Second Amended Complaint and to Set Aside Judgment of Dismissal" [Dkt. No. 48]; and filed a Second Amended Complaint, even though Plaintiff's Motion for Leave to File a Second Amended Complaint had not been granted or even ruled on, and the Judgment of Dismissal had not been set aside. [Dkt. No. 49.]

On September 18, 2023, the Court issued an order striking the Second Amended Complaint. [Dkt. No. 51.] In addition, the Court issued an order granting Plaintiff's motion to set aside the dismissal and ordering Plaintiff to file an amended complaint within 14 days of the order. [Dkt. No. 54.] Two days later, on September 20, 2023, Plaintiff filed the Second Amended Complaint. [Dkt. No. 55.]

Defendants moved to dismiss the Second Amended Complaint for (again) violating Rule 8. [Dkt. Nos. 78, 110.] On April 23, 2024, Magistrate Judge Brianna Fuller Mircheff filed an Interim Report and Recommendation of United States Magistrate Judge (the, "Report"). The Report recommended Plaintiff's Second Amended Complaint be dismissed. Notably, the Magistrate Judge recommended the SAC be dismissed because it failed to comply with FRCP 8. The Report explained:

> The 121-page SAC, like the First Amended Complaint (see ECF 45 at 8-9 (discussing same)), is excessively long and often confusing. Indeed, the SAC is almost fifty pages longer than the First Amended Complaint – a complaint that the District Judge described as excessively prolix. Moreover, despite the District Judge's prior warnings, the SAC continues to exhibit the landmarks of a "shotgun pleading." The Court thus agrees with Defendents that pleading." The Court thus agrees with Defendants that dismissal under Rule 8 is once again appropriate.

[Dkt. No. 133.]

On August 12, 2024, this Court accepted the Report and Recommendation filed by Magistrate Judge Brianna Fuller Mircheff. The Court ordered the following: (1) dismissed the Second Amended Complaint in its entirety for failure to comply with Rule 8; (2) dismissed with prejudice all of Plaintiff's claims against the State

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Bar and its committees or departments because these Defendants have Eleventh

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	Amendment immunity (except for Plaintiff's Twelfth and Thirteenth Causes of
	Action based only on Title IX); (3) dismissed with prejudice all of Plaintiff's claims
	against the individual State Bar Defendants in their official capacity (except
	Plaintiff's Twelfth and Thirteenth Causes of Action based only on Title IX and
	Sixth and Seventh Causes of Action to the extent those claims may seek declaratory
	or injunctive relief); (4) dismissed with prejudice Plaintiff's Sixth Cause of Action
	to the extent it seeks Federal Bar admission; (5) dismissed with prejudice Plaintiff's
	Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Cause of Action under 18 U.S.C. §§ 241, 242
	and 245 because there is no private right of action under those statutes; and (6)
	dismissed with prejudice Defendants office of Chief Trial Counsel, Board of
	Trustees, Office of Admissions and Office of General Counsel. [Dkt. No. 145.]
	On August 21, 2024, Plaintiff filed his Third Amended Complaint. All
	Defendants filed motions to dismiss the Third Amended Complaint. The Magistrate
	Judge issued a report and recommendation to dismiss Plaintiff's Third Amended
	Complaint for failure to state a federal cause of action against any Defendant.
	Specifically, the report stated "[n]one of the federal causes of action are supported
	by plausible factual allegations giving rise an inference of liability." [Dkt. No. 213
	at 14:16-18.] The recommendation included a dismissal without leave to amend for
	the first, third, fifth, and eighth causes of action against Defendants and the State
	Bar defendants. The recommendation dismissed the remaining causes of action for
	RICO violations and state law claims without leave to the State Bar defendants, but
	allowed Plaintiff leave to amend as to Defendants and defendant Ira Spiro. [Dkt. No.

The Court accepted the Magistrate Judge's report and recommendation on March 27, 2025. The Court ordered Plaintiff's Third Amended Complaint be dismissed. The order noted the complaint failed to state a cause of action against

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Defendants. The order also precluded Plaintiff from pleading causes of action other than the RICO cause of action and state claims. [Dkt. No. 248.]

Plaintiff subsequently filed his Fourth Amended Complaint within the time provided by the Court. [Dkt. Nos. 255, 257.]

III. **ARGUMENT**

Authority for Dismissal.

This Court has the authority to dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint with prejudice. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), a dismissal under Rule 8 "applies to good claims as well as bad, and is a basis for dismissal independent of Rule 12(b)(6)." McHenry v. Renne, 84 F.3d 1172, 1179 (9th Cir. 1996). Furthermore "[a] complaint which fails to comply with rules 8(a) and 8(e) may be dismissed with prejudice pursuant to rule 41(b)." Nevijel v. North Coast Life Ins. Co., 651 F.2d 671, 673 (9th Cir. 1981) (internal citations omitted). As this Court noted in its order denying Plaintiff leave to "Supplement" the First Amended Complaint, the Court has the authority to dismiss a complaint sua sponte where that complaint does not comply with Rule 8. [Dkt. No. 45, p. 6.]

In addition to the above, Local Rules provide the Court with grounds to grant this Motion. Local Rule 83-2.2.3 states that "[a]ny person appearing pro se is required to comply with...the [Federal Rules of Civil Procedure]." The fact that Plaintiff is appearing pro se does not excuse his failure to comply with Federal rules governing the pleadings. In addition, Local Rule 83-2.2.4 states that "[f]ailure to comply with the rules enumerated in L.R. 83-2.2.3 may be grounds for dismissal or judgment by default."

The authority of the Court to dismiss a complaint for its failure to meet the basic pleading standards enumerated by Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8 cannot be contested. Accordingly, this Court has the authority to dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint for its failure to comply with Rule 8.

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Additionally, Rule 12(b)(6) authorizes dismissal of a pleading for "failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted." "A Rule 12(b)(6) dismissal may be based on either a 'lack of cognizable legal theory' or 'the absence of sufficient facts alleged under a cognizable legal theory." Johnson v. Riverside Healthcare Sys., LP, 534 F.3d 1116, 1121 (9th Cir. 2008) (citation omitted). To survive a motion to dismiss, a plaintiff must allege "enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face[.]" Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007). A plaintiff must thus allege facts that consist of "more than a sheer possibility that a defendant has acted unlawfully." Ashcroft v. Iqbal, 556 U.S. 662, 678 (2009). The allegations must contain "more than labels and conclusions, and a formulaic recitation of the elements of a cause of action will not do." Twombly, 550 U.S. at 555. Instead, a plaintiff must allege facts sufficient to "raise a right to relief above the speculative level." Id. While a court must accept the allegations of the complaint as true and construe the pleading in the light most favorable to the plaintiff, the "court is not required to accept legal conclusions cast in the form of factual allegations if those conclusions cannot reasonably be drawn from the facts alleged." Clegg v. Cult Awareness Network, 18 F.3d 752, 754-55 (9th Cir. 1994).

Where a plaintiff cannot recover damages or other relief as a matter of law, the proper procedural vehicle to dismiss the requested remedy is a motion under Rule 12(b)(6) rather than a motion to strike under Rule 12(f). See Whittlestone, Inc. v. Handi-Craft Co., 618 F.3d 970, 974-45 (9th Cir. 2010); Orozco v. Vivint, Inc., 2021 WL 1153032, at *3 (C.D. Cal. Feb. 19, 2021).

When amendment of a complaint would be futile, as it would be here, it is appropriate for the district court to dismiss the complaint with prejudice. See, e.g., Curry v. Yelp Ine., 875 F.3d 1219, 1228 (9th Cir. 2017).

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В. The Fourth Amended Complaint Violates Federal Rules of Civil **Procedure Rule 8.**

Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint, like his four prior complaints, violates Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 8(a) and the local rules. Pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure Rule 8, a pleading stating a claim for relief requires three things: (1) "a short and plain statement of the grounds for the court's jurisdiction, unless the court already has jurisdiction and the claim needs no new jurisdictional support;" (2) "a short and plain statement of the claim showing the pleader is entitled to relief; and (3) a demand for relief sought, which may include relief in the alternative or different types of relief." (Emphasis added.)

Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint is neither short nor plain. Rather, the complaint is 63 pages with 287 paragraphs and an additional 119 pages of exhibits. The first cause of action alone has 62 paragraphs and reincorporates by reference nearly all of the 87 preceding paragraphs. [Id. at ¶ 92.] The allegations are jumbled among the pages and vary between purported historical facts, speculations, and conclusory assertions about a number of named defendants. The allegations in the Fourth Amended Complaint are so convoluted, verbose, and confusing that no reasonable defendant would know exactly what they were responding. As stated by the court in *Hearns v. San Bernardino Police Dep't*, dismissal under Rule 8 is used in "those instances in which the complaint is so verbose, confused and redundant that its true substance, if any, is well disguised." 530 F.3d 1124, 1131 (9th Cir. 2017) (citation and quotations omitted).

Rule 9(b) "does not allow a complaint to ... lump multiple defendants together but require[s] plaintiffs to differentiate their allegations when suing more than one defendant." Cisneros v. Instant Capital Funding Grp., Inc., 263 F.R.D. 595, 606-07 (E.D.Cal.2009) (quoting Swartz v. KPMG LLP, 476 F.3d 756, 764–65 (9th Cir.2007) (internal quotation marks omitted)). Plaintiff here continues to use the shotgun pleading style that the Court criticized in its denial of Plaintiff's request to

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supplement the First Amended Complaint and the Magistrate Judge's Report and 1 2 Recommendation as to Plaintiff's Second Amended Complaint. [Dkt. No. 45, p. 5-6; 3 No. 132, pp. 9-10.] Despite being previously warned against the practice, Plaintiff 4 incorporates by reference numerous prior paragraphs into his causes of action. The 5 incorporated paragraphs often do not apply to the cause of action and prevent Defendants from determining what alleged conduct gave rise to the causes of action. 6

For example, Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint states:

Document 270

ID #:9442

Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates by reference each allegation contained in Paragraphs 33-84, focusing on the facts that demonstrate the pattern of racketeering activity, including wire and mail fraud (see ¶ 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 76, 84), systematic misrepresentation and fraudulent schemes (¶ 33-40, 42-44, 46-57, 76, 84), institutional failure and facilitated fraud (¶ 35, 37, 39, 41, 43, 46, 47, 49-57, 76, 84), and the financial and emotional damages suffered by the Plaintiff as a direct result (see ¶ 33, 84, 76, 84). Page use the freudulent actions as a direct result (see ¶¶ 33-84, 76, 84). Because the fraudulent actions were carried out through electronic communications and postal services, they are alleged to meet the definition of predicate acts under RICO. (Plaintiff's FAC at 20:1-11)

Later, Plaintiff incorporates paragraphs 1-121 for his second cause of action. [Id. at ¶ 152.] Despite the Court's prior admonition, Plaintiff defiantly repeats this practice of incorporating paragraphs that precede it in his FAC. [Id. at ¶¶ 92, 152, 168, 210i, and 219.]

Additionally, under the first cause of action for RICO, Plaintiff alleges that the Fourth Amended Complaint adheres to the heightened pleading standards for racketeering and that each act is detailed with specificity in paragraphs 33-84. [Id. at ¶ 89.] However, these paragraphs barely mention five of the individual defendants [see id. at ¶¶ 37, 52, 62 and 75] and are styled full of "everyone did everything." [See id. at ¶33-84.] Additionally, under the RICO cause of action, Plaintiff consistently uses the term "Defendants" to describe the racketeering activity. [See id. at ¶¶ 91, 94, 98, 100, 101, 102, 108, 109, 112, 122, 128, etc...] Indeed, these "everyone did everything" allegations must be dismissed for violating Rule 8. Destfino v. Reiswig, 630 F.3d 952, 958 (9th Cir. 2011) (Ninth Circuit affirmed district court ruling dismissing complaint that grouped multiple defendants together under fraud cause of

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action where the complaint failed to "set out which of the defendants made which of the fraudulent statements/conduct").

Further, and importantly, the Fourth Amended Complaint is unclear as to which individuals are named in the complaint and which causes of action are against which defendants. For example, three individual defendants, Prem Sarin, Edith Pomposo and Ismael Venegas, are listed as a defined defendant party [see ¶¶ 8, 16 & 20]. But no cause of action is asserted against them. [See Fourth Amended Complaint, pp. 18, 40, 45 and 58.] Plaintiff also fails to list Viramontes as a defined and named defendant party, yet includes Viramontes in the first and third causes of action. [Id. at pp. 18 and 45.]

Additionally, Plaintiff's definition of terms, or lack thereof, adds to the considerable confusion of which causes of action are against which defendants. Specifically, Plaintiff defines "The Board of Directors" as PCL's "governing body . . . responsible for overall management and strategic decision." Plaintiff defines "Officers" as "individuals holding executive positions within the institution, including roles such as President, Dean, and other senior administrators." Plaintiff also defines "Agents of the Peoples College of Law" as "individuals or entities acting on behalf of or under the institution's authority, including faculty, staff, and contractors." However, the defined terms do not state which specific named Defendants are included within each term.

Furthermore, although Plaintiff defines these three terms, Plaintiff does not list the entity "The Board of Directors, Officers and Agents of the Peoples College of Law" as a party defendant in the Fourth Amended Complaint. [See ¶¶ 2-25.] Yet, Plaintiff's third cause of action for negligence and negligence per se references PCL's "Board of Directors." [See Fourth Amended Complaint, p. 45, above ¶ 167.] Further, Plaintiff's fourth cause of action references "The Board of Directors, Officers, and Agents of the Peoples College of Law." [See Fourth Amended

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Complaint, p. 58, above ¶ 210.] It is unclear which individual defendants should be included in these definitions and therefore the cause of action.

To add to the confusion, Plaintiff's third and fourth causes of action also lists individuals that would presumably be included in these definitions. For example, the fourth cause of action for negligent hiring, retention, and supervision includes both "The Board of Directors" and specifically "Hector Pena" (a former President and Board Treasurer). Presumably, by naming the "Board of Directors, Officers and Agents," Pena would have already been included in this cause of action as he was on a former President and Board Treasurer. Thus, the non-specified individual Defendants are left unable to determine whether that cause of action is plead against them.

To further compound the uncertainty, Plaintiff also defined "Defendants" within his first cause of action. [Fourth Amended Complaint, ¶ 104.] Again, he failed to identify the specific named individual defendants included in that definition. Given that he used the word "Defendants" throughout his Fourth Amended Complaint, the named defendants cannot determine whether all or specific causes of action are being plead against them. This is particularly confusing for the second cause of action, which only lists "The Peoples College of Law" as a defendant [see p. 40, above ¶ 151]. But Plaintiff uses the term "Defendants" throughout this cause of action. [See e.g., ¶ 151 ("This cause of action arises from Defendants' violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act. . . . ").] Yet again, the nonspecific individual Defendants are unable to determine whether the second cause of action is plead against them.

This problem is also exacerbated by the fact that Plaintiff alleges that "Defendants refers to all named defendant natural persons . . ." [FAC, ¶ 104.] If these individual defendants are being sued in their individual capacities, the individual Defendants can only assume they are not being sued in their capacity as the Board of

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Directors, Officers or Agents of the Peoples College of Law. Thus, Plaintiff's claims that the individual Defendants are included as the Board of Directors is nonsensical.

Indeed, based on the verbose and confusing nature of the FAC, Plaintiff has clearly violated Rule 8.

C. Plaintiff Fails to State a Claim Against Defendants.

The Court should dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint based on Plaintiff's violation of Rule 8. Nevertheless, the Fourth Amended Complaint should also dismissed for failure to state a claim against Defendants. Indeed, each and every cause of action has deficiencies that warrant dismissal without prejudice under Rule 12(b)(6).

1. First Cause of Action – RICO Claim

Plaintiff appears to plead this cause of action against Defendants, Sarinana, Bouffard, Viramontes, Pena, Spiro, Gillens, Gonzalez, Torres, Aramayo, Sanchez, Zuniga, Maestas, and Franco. Defendants Venegas, Viramontes, and PCL are not mentioned. Plaintiff pleads a RICO claim under 18 U.S.C. § 1962(c).³ Plaintiff generally alleges Defendants engaged in racketeering activity by sending false or inaccurate transcripts, misrepresenting accreditation status, and disseminating false financial solvency statements. Plaintiff fails to state a cause of action for RICO against Defendants much less meet the heightened pleading standards as required by law.

A civil cause of action RICO must allege: "(1) conduct (2) of an enterprise (3) through a pattern (4) of racketeering activity (known as 'predicate acts') (5) causing injury to plaintiff's 'business or property.'" Living Designs, Inc. v. E.I. Dupont de

³ This section states "It shall be unlawful for any person employed by or associated with any enterprise engaged in, or the activities of which affect, interstate or foreign commerce, to conduct or participate, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of such enterprise's affairs through a pattern of racketeering activity or collection of unlawful debt."

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Nemours and Co., 431 F.3d 353, 361 (9th Cir 2005) (internal citation omitted). The enterprise may be a legal entity or an association in fact. Doan v. Singh, 617 F. App'x. 684, 686 (9th Cir. 2015). Plaintiff alleges that the individual defendants operated as an associated-in-fact enterprise. As stated by the Court, "[t]o allege an association-in-fact, the complaint must describe "a group of persons associated together for a common purpose of engaging in a course of conduct[]' ... [and] must provide both 'evidence of an ongoing organization, formal or informal,' and 'evidence that the various associates function as a continuing unit." *Id.* at 686 (quoting United States v. Turkette, 452 U.S. 576, 583, 101 S.Ct. 2524, 69 L.Ed.2d 246 (1981) and *Odom v. Microsoft Corp.*, 486 F.3d 541, 551 (9th Cir.2007)).

"A "pattern" of racketeering activity also requires proof that the racketeering predicates are [1] related and [2] ... amount to or pose a threat of continued criminal activity." Best Deals on TV, Inc. v. Naveed, C 07-1610 SBA, 2007 WL 2825652, *5 (N.D. Cal. Sept. 26, 2007) (quoting *Turner v. Cook*, 362 F.3d 1219, 1229 (9th Cir. 2004)). "The 'related to' requirement is satisfied if the alleged acts 'have the same or similar purposes, results, participants, victims, or methods of commission, or otherwise are interrelated by distinguishing characteristics and are not isolated events.' "Id. (quoting H.J. Inc. v. Northwestern Bell Tel. Co., 492 U.S. 229, 240 (1989)). "In turn, 'to satisfy the continuity requirement, [a complainant] must prove either a series of related predicates extending over a substantial period of time, i.e., closed-ended continuity, or past conduct that by its nature projects into the future with a threat of repetition, i.e. open-ended continuity." Steam Press Holdings, Inc. v. Hawaii Teamsters and Allied Workers Union, Local 996, 302 F.3d 998, 1011 (9th Cir. 2002) (quoting Howard v. America Online Inc., 208 F.3d 741, 750 (9th Cir. 2000)); see also *Naveed*, 2007 WL 2825652 at *5 ("Closed-ended continuity exists when there is 'a series of related predicates extending over a substantial period of time.' ... Open-ended continuity requires 'past conduct that by its nature projects into the future with a threat of repetition' or constitute the enterprise's 'regular way

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of doing business," "quoting H.J. Inc., 492 U.S. at 241-42; Allwaste, Inc. v. Hecht, 65 F.3d 1523, 1528 (9th Cir. 1995)).

Plaintiff's paragraphs under the first cause of action and the incorporated paragraphs generally allege that Defendants sent false or inaccurate transcripts, misrepresented accreditation status, and disseminated false financial solvency statements. However, none of the allegations state, allege, or otherwise provide that the Defendants were working together in concert for a common goal. Additionally, Plaintiff has not adequately pled the relationship between acts required to show a pattern of racketeering activity.

The RICO cause of action also fails because Plaintiff did not meet the heightened pleading standard for the racketeering activity. For that element, Plaintiff "must state the time, place, and specific content of the false representations as well as the identities of the parties to the misrepresentation." Odom, 486 F.3d at 553-56. The majority of the allegations do not identify any individuals, dates, or misrepresentations. The allegations which do name individual Defendants are conclusory and fail to identify the false representations or the identity of the parties to the misrepresentation. For example, Plaintiff realleged and incorporated by reference "each allegation contained in Paragraphs 33-84, focusing on the facts that demonstrate the pattern of racketeering activity." [Fourth Amended Complaint, ¶ 92.] These paragraphs barely mention five of the individual defendants [see id. at ¶¶ 37, 52, 62 and 75] and certainly to do describe the time, place and specific content of false representations that is required to allege a RICO claim. Odom, 486 F.3d at 553-56. Additionally, none of the paragraphs entitled "Pattern of Racketeering Activity" provide allegations to meet RICO's heightened pleading standards. [See Fourth Amended Complaint, ¶¶ 91, 102, 105 and 116.]

Plaintiff also fails to state a claim under the RICO cause of action because he did not plead an injury to his business or property. To have standing under § 1964(c), a civil RICO plaintiff must show: (1) that his alleged harm qualifies as

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injury to his business or property; and (2) that his harm was "by reason of" the
RICO violation, which requires the plaintiff to establish proximate causation.
Canyon Cnty. v. Syngenta Seeds, Inc., 519 F.3d 969, 972 (9th Cir. 2008). A plaintiff
does not state a RICO claim if he "mere[ly] [alleges] injury to a valuable intangible
property interest." Oscar v. Univ. Students Co-Operative Ass'n, 965 F.2d 783, 785
(9th Cir. 1992) (en banc) . The Ninth Circuit requires that a plaintiff asserting injury
to property allege "concrete financial loss." Oscar v. Univ. Students Coop. Ass'n,
965 F.2dat 785. "Financial loss alone, however, is insufficient." Canyon Cnty, 519
F.3d at 975 (italics added). "Without a harm to a specific business or property
interest—a categorical inquiry typically determined by reference to state law—there
is no injury to business or property within the meaning of RICO." Diaz v. Gates,
420 F.3d 897, 900 (9th Cir.2005) (en banc), cert. denied, 546 U.S. 1131, 126 S.Ct.
1069, 163 L.Ed.2d 928 (2006).

Here, Plaintiff has not alleged or shown he has suffered concrete financial loss to a specific business or property interest. Most of Plaintiff's allegations merely conclude he suffered intangible damages like lost career opportunities, professional harm and emotional distress. [Fourth Amended Complaint ¶¶ 131, 144, 145, 148.] Plaintiff also alleges that he was prevented from obtaining his degree, which caused him financial harm and that he made financial expenditures on tuition and related costs under false pretenses. [Id. at ¶¶ 145, 148.] However, these alleged financial losses alone are not sufficient. Canyon Cnty, 519 F.3d at 975-76 (allegation that County was forced to spend millions of dollars for health care services insufficient to establish standing under RICO).

Thus, Plaintiff failed to plead a RICO cause of action. The cause of action was Plaintiff's only federal cause of action, so it and the remainder of the state causes of action must be dismissed. See Wren v. Sletten Const. Co., 654 F.2d 529, 536 (9th Cir. 1981) ("When the state issues apparently predominate and all federal claims are dismissed before trial, the proper exercise of discretion requires dismissal

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Cal. 2012) (noting that state-law claims "should" be dismissed if all the federal claims have been dismissed).4 2.

of the state claim."); Ismail v. Cnty. Of Orange, 917 F. Supp. 2d 1060, 1072 (C.D.

Second Cause of Action - Violation of Unruh Civil Rights Act

Plaintiff asserts his second cause of action against PCL only and alleges that PCL discriminated against Plaintiff on the basis of his race. [Fourth Amended Complaint ¶ 151.] The cause of action alleges the discrimination resulted in unequal treatment and harm to Plaintiff's educational and career opportunity. Plaintiff fails to state a cause of action for violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

This cause of action required Plaintiff to plead the following: (1) Defendant discriminated or made a distinction that denied Plaintiff the full and equal privileges/advantages; (2) a substantial motivating reason for Defendant's conduct was its perception of Plaintiff's race; (3) Plaintiff was harmed; and (4) Defendant's conduct was a substantial factor in causing Plaintiff's harm. CACI No. 3060. The Supreme Court of California held "a plaintiff seeking to establish a cause of action under the Unruh Act must plead and prove intentional discrimination in . . . violation of the terms of the Act." Harris v. Capital Growth Investors XIV, 52 Cal. 3d 1142, 1175 (1991) (disapproved on other grounds by Munson v. Del Taco, Inc., 46 Cal. 4th 661 (2009)). Thus, absent an ADA violation, the Unruh Civil Rights Act requires allegations supporting " 'willful, affirmative misconduct'" with the specific intent "to accomplish discrimination on the basis of [a protected trait]." Koebke v.

⁴ Plaintiff alleges that diversity jurisdiction exits because he is a resident of Texas and "Defendants predominantly reside and conduct business within the State of California." [Fourth Amended Complaint at ¶ 27.] However, Plaintiff fails to provide allegations of such for each individual defendant named. [See id. at ¶¶ 3-20.] Accordingly, Plaintiff has failed to plead sufficient facts to establish diversity jurisdiction. See Harris v. Rand, 682 F.3d 846, 851 (9th Cir. 2012) (in diversity cases, allegations must be pled as to the citizenship of each party (since all defendants must be citizens of different states than any plaintiff)).

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Bernardo Heights Country Club, 36 Cal.4th 824, 853-54 (2005). Although "evidence of disparate impact [may] be probative of intentional discrimination in some cases" under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, it cannot alone establish such intent. Id. (italics omitted).

Plaintiff's complaint contains no non-conclusory allegations of intentional discrimination. The allegations do not allege or provide any basis that the alleged actions were performed because of a discriminatory intent. The only example Plaintiff provides in his complaint is that PCL promptly responded to Nancy Popp's grievances (a white female student) but "failed to adequately respond to Plaintiff's grievances concerning inaccurate records and course access." [Fourth Amended Complaint ¶ 158, italics added.] This is the only allegation that can remotely establish intentional discrimination. This single allegation not only fails to show discrimination, but utterly lacks the requirement to plead *intentional* discrimination. Moreover, Plaintiff's own allegations contradict any claim for discrimination. Plaintiff alleges that Ms. Popp submitted a grievance to the PCL Board of Directors concerning "the school's operation, including inaccurate grading, lack of transparency in governance, and inconsistent instruction." [Id. at ¶¶53-54.] As such, based on his own allegations, Plaintiff's alleged denial of privileges or accommodations were experienced by all students.

Moreover, the second cause of action's heading only includes "The Peoples College of Law" and no individuals are stated. However, throughout the cause of action, Plaintiff includes certain named individuals. For example, in paragraph 161(iv) and (v), Plaintiff alleges that the acts or omissions include "PCL's misleading advertising and recruitment practices that targeted vulnerable communities, as facilitated by Gonzalez, Pena, Spiro and Sarinana" and "PCL's failure to provide a quality education and accurate transcripts, because of the actions and inactions of Gonzalez, Pena, Spiro, Sarin, Bouffard and Sarinana." It is unclear whether this cause action is asserted against these individuals and whether the

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individuals violated the act while acting in an official capacity in their role for the PCL or as individuals. Given the cause of action appears to only apply to PCL, Plaintiff cannot assert the claim against PCL if the individuals were not acting in their official PCL capacity.

3. Third and Fourth Causes of Action for Negligence, Negligence Per Se and Negligent Hiring, Retention, and **Supervision**

Plaintiff alleges that the negligence causes of action arise from Defendants failure to provide accurate transcripts and failure to comply with educational standards. [Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint ¶ 167.] Plaintiff also alleges that individuals hired by PCL engaged in misconduct which included failure to enforce regulations and engaging in obstructionist conduct. [Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint ¶ 210.] Plaintiff fails to state a cause of action for negligence, negligence per se and negligent hiring, retention and supervision.

Plaintiff seeks only monetary damages against the named defendants under the third and fourth causes of action. [¶¶ 209, 218.] However, such damages are unavailable and for this reason alone, these causes of action fail. California Corporation Code section 5047.5(b) provides immunity from claims of negligence that "Except as provided in this section no cause of action for monetary damages shall arise against any person serving without compensation as a director or officer of a nonprofit corporation..."

Here, Defendants were unpaid and PCL was a nonprofit organization. [See Fourth Amended Complaint, ¶ 3; see also Exhibits 5-7 to Defendant Spiro's Motion to Dismiss Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint filed as docket 263]. Although unclear, if Plaintiff is asserting these causes of action against the individual defendants in their capacity as directors and officers, then Plaintiff's allegations of negligence are within the scope of duties as directors and officers.

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Plaintiff also fails to identify which defendants are included in the causes of action. Despite the parenthetical under the third and fourth causes of action listing specific individuals, the subsequent paragraphs consistent use of "Defendants" without definition of which Defendants it includes. Moreover, Plaintiff uses undefined terms and does not specify which, if any, individuals belong to the undefined groups. For example, in paragraph 178, Plaintiff alleges "Defendants, as officers and directors of PCL, had a duty to ensure the accuracy of student transcripts..." This creates the assumption that "Defendants" only includes the individual Defendants, and not PCL. Yet, neither officers nor directors is defined. Plaintiff continued his undefined use of Defendants in the fourth cause of action creating further confusion whether the cause of action is plead against PCL or the individual Defendants. Naming the individual Defendants is improper as this cause of action is specifically for employer liability—not employee liability. The causes of action also fail to identify whether the individuals alleged therein were acting as individuals or in their role for PCL.

D. Plaintiff's Fourth Amended Complaint Should Be Dismissed With **Prejudice**

Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b) states as follow: "If the plaintiff fails to prosecute or to comply with these rules or a court order, a defendant may move to dismiss the action or any claim against it. Unless the dismissal order states otherwise, a dismissal under this subdivision (b) and any dismissal not under this rule—except one for lack of jurisdiction, improper venue, or failure to join a party under Rule 19 operates as an adjudication on the merits."

Furthermore, "[a] complaint which fails to comply with rules 8(a) and 8(e) may be dismissed with prejudice pursuant to rule 41(b)." Nevijel, 651 F.2d at 673 (internal citations omitted). In Nevijel, the Court of Appeals affirmed a dismissal with prejudice for violation of Rules 8(a) and 8(e) on a first amended complaint. The Nevijel Court held that, while a Court should look for "less drastic alternatives" the trial court's

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dismissal of the pleading was reasonable given the opportunities the plaintiff had to amend. Id. at 674. "The original complaint, filed in November 1976, was verbose, confusing and almost entirely conclusory. It consisted of 48 pages with 14 pages of addenda and 9 pages of exhibits...The second complaint was 23 pages long with 24 pages of addenda, named additional defendants without leave of the court, and was equally verbose, confusing and conclusory as the initial complaint." Id.

Plaintiff has been allowed six attempts to assert a claim against Defendants. This Court has dismissed the initial Complaint, First Amended Complaint, Supplement to the First Amended Complaint, Second Amended Complaint, and the Third Amended Complaint. Defendants have continuously raised the same concerns over and over. The Court has even provided guidance in its orders and recommendations, but Plaintiff has failed to abide. Given the number of times the Court has given Plaintiff to comply with Rule 8 and Rule 12, and his persistent failure to do so, the Court should grant this Motion and dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint with prejudice.

IV. **CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, Defendants respectfully request that the Court grant their Motion and dismiss the Fourth Amended Complaint with prejudice.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL RULE 11-6.1

The undersigned counsel of record for Defendants certifies that this brief contains 6152 words, which complies with the word limit of L.R. 11-6.1.

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By:

HAIGHT BROWN & BONESTEEL LLP

/s/ Arezoo Jamshid		
Arezoo Jamshidi		
Jeffrey Kirwin		
Attorneys for Defendants THE GUILD		
LAW SCHOOL DBA PEOPLE'S		
COLLEGE OF LAW, JOSHUA		
GILLENS, WILLIAM MAESTAS,		
BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE		
PEOPLE'S COLLEGE OF LAW,		
CHRISTINA MARIN GONZALEZ;		
ROGER ARAMAYO; ISMAIL		
VENEGAS; CLEMENTE FRANCO;		
HECTOR PENA; PASCUAL TORRES;		
CAROL DEUPREE; JESSICA		
VIRAMONTES; JUAN SARINANA;		
ADRIANA ZUNIGA; PREM SARIN;		
DAVID BOUFFARD; and HECTOR		
SANCHEZ		

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DECLARATION OF JEFFREY KIRWIN

I, Jeffrey Kirwin, declare as follows:

Document 270

ID #:9455

- I am an attorney at the law firm of Haight Brown & Bonesteel LLP counsel of record for Defendants, THE GUILD LAW SCHOOL dba THE PEOPLES COLLEGE OF LAW; CHRISTINA MARIN GONZALEZ; HECTOR C. PENA; JUAN MANUAL SARINANA; PREM SARIN; DAVID TYLER BOUFFARD; JOSHUA GILLENS; CLEMENTE FRANCO; HECTOR SANCHEZ; PASCUAL TORRES; CAROL DEUPREE; JOSHUA GILLENS; CLEMENTE FRANCO; HECTOR SANCHEZ; ADRIANA ZUNIGA NUNEZ; ROGER ARAMAYO; WILLIAM MAESTAS; ISMAEL VENEGAS; ADRIANA ZUNIGA; PREM SARIN; DAVID BOUFFARD; and HECTOR SANCHEZ ("Defendants") in the above-captioned action. I am a member in good standing of the State Bar of California. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this Declaration and, if called as a witness, could and would testify competently to such facts under oath.
- 2. Defendants received electronic service of Plaintiff TODD HILL's ("Plaintiff") Fourth Amended Complaint ("FAC") on April 3, 2025.
- 3. On April 7, 2025, counsel for Defendants requested to meet and confer with Plaintiff pursuant to Local Rule 7-3. However, Plaintiff declined to meet and confer with Defendants. Instead, Plaintiff responded on the same date with a "nonnegotiable" list of information which Defendants had to provide to Plaintiff before he would meet and confer. The list of information required included a detailed legal grounds, factual basis, specific relief sought, and proposed stipulations.
- 4. Counsel for Defendants declined to provide the requisite information, and Plaintiff re-stated he would only meet and confer "if and when" Defendants provided the information to him. Therefore, Defendants tried to satisfy the Court's meet and confer requirement but Plaintiff declined to do so. (A true and correct copy of the email communications are attached hereto as Exhibit A)

5. Between August 29 to September 3, 2024, counsel for Defendants
attempted to meet and confer with Plaintiff regarding the dismissal of his Third
Amended Complaint. Plaintiff again demanded a detailed outline prior to meeting
and conferring with Defendants. Even after counsel for Defendant provided the
outline, he alleged it was not detailed enough despite Defendants filing several
motions to dismiss Plaintiff's Complaints on the same grounds. (A true and correc
copy of the emails communications are attached hereto as Exhibit B)

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on April 15, 2025, at Irvine, California.

Jeffrey Kirwin

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PROOF OF SERVICE Hill v. The Board of Directors, Officers, et al.

Case No. 2:23-cv-01298-JLS-CFM

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ORANGE

At the time of service, I was over 18 years of age and not a party to this action. I am employed in the County of San Diego, State of California. My business address is 402 West Broadway, Suite 1850, San Diego, California 92101.

On April 17, 2025, I served true copies of the following document(s) described as **DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS PLAINTIFF'S FOURTH AMENDED COMPLAINT; DECLARATION OF JEFFREY KIRWIN** on the interested parties in this action as follows:

SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST

BY CM/ECF NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING: I electronically filed the document(s) with the Clerk of the Court by using the CM/ECF system. Participants in the case who are registered CM/ECF users will be served by the CM/ECF system. Participants in the case who are not registered CM/ECF users will be served by mail or by other means permitted by the court rules.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct and that I am employed in the office of a member of the bar of this Court at whose direction the service was made.

Executed on April 17, 2025, at San Diego, California.

/s/ Arezoo Jamshidi Arezoo Jamshidi

SERVICE LIST Hill v. The Board of Directors, Officers, et al. Case No. 2:23-cv-01298-JLS-CFM

2	Case No. 2:23-cv-01298-JLS-CFM			
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